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CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of selecting a transmission system from a plurality of transmission systems for input signals captured at a remote location, comprising the steps of:

- a. providing access to multiple transmission systems in a prioritized hierarchy;
- b. detecting the presence of the highest priority transmission system;
- 5 c. selecting the highest priority transmission system;
- d. selecting the next highest priority transmission system if the highest priority transmission system is not available.

2. A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the detecting step includes the steps of:

- a. verifying the presence of the highest priority transmission system;
- b. confirming the operability of the highest priority transmission system.

3. A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the input signal is a data signal.

4. A method in accordance with claim 1, wherein the input signal is an audio signal.

5. A method in accordance with claim 1, including a plurality of input signal formats comprising a data signal and an audio signal, the method further including the steps of:

- a. determining whether the signal is of one class or another class signal;
- b. selecting a first transmission system as the highest priority transmission system if the

5 signal is of said one class;

c. selecting a second transmission system as the highest priority transmission system if the signal is of said other class.

6. A method in accordance with claim 2, wherein one of said transmission systems is wired.

7. A method in accordance with claim 6, wherein said wired transmission system is a land line POTS telephone.

8. A method in accordance with claim 6, wherein said wired transmission is an Internet connection.

9. A method in accordance with claim 6, wherein one of said transmission systems is wireless.

10. A method in accordance with claim 9, wherein said wireless transmission system is

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a cellular telephone system.

11. A method in accordance with claim 9, wherein said wireless transmission system is a PCS (Personal Communication Services) radio system.

12. A method in accordance with claim 2, wherein each of said transmission systems is wireless.

13. A method in accordance with claim 2, wherein at least one of said wireless transmission systems is a cellular telephone system and at least one other of said wireless transmission systems is a PCS (Personal Communication Services) radio system.

14. A method in accordance with claim 2, wherein all of said transmission systems are PCS (Personal Communication Services) radio systems.

15. An apparatus for selecting one of a plurality of transmission systems for transmitting an input signal captured by a remote device, comprising:

- a. a connector for connecting the device to a first transmission system interface;
- b. a second, default transmission system provided as an integral component of the device;
- c. a detector for detecting the presence of a first transmission system;
- d. a control system for selecting the first transmission system whenever it is present and for selecting the default transmission system whenever the first transmission system is not present.

16. An apparatus in accordance with claim 15, further comprising a verification device for confirming the operability of the first transmission system, once detected, wherein said control system is operable to select the default transmission system whenever the first transmission system is inoperable.

17. An apparatus in accordance with claim 15, wherein said detector is adapted for detecting the physical presence of the first transmission system interface.

18. An apparatus in accordance with claim 15, wherein said detector is a switch having an activated position and a deactivated position, and wherein the presence of a first transmission interface engages the switch and moves it from the deactivated position to the activated position.

19. An apparatus in accordance with claim 18, wherein said detector is a signal detector operable to initiate transmission in the presence of a predetermined signal.

20. An apparatus in accordance with claim 19, wherein said signal is a voltage level.

21. An apparatus in accordance with claim 19, wherein said signal is an audio signal.

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22. An apparatus in accordance with claim 15, wherein the input signal is a data signal.

23. A apparatus in accordance with claim 15, wherein the input signal is an audio signal.

24. An apparatus in accordance with claim 23, including a plurality of input signal formats comprising a data signal and an audio signal, the apparatus further comprising a signal detector for determining whether the signal is a data signal or an audio signal. wherein the control system is adapted for selecting the first transmission system if the signal is a data signal and
5 selecting the second transmission system if the signal is an audio signal.

25. An apparatus in accordance with claim 15, wherein one of said transmission systems is wired.

26. An apparatus in accordance with claim 15, wherein one of said transmission systems is wireless.

27. A method of selecting a transmission system from a plurality of systems by establishing prioritizing criteria based on input signals, operating conditions, wherein one of the operating conditions is the determination of whether the transmission is occurring during peak or off-peak periods, and functionality of the selected transmission system, comprising the steps of:

5 a. establishing a priority hierarchy based on three sets of criteria comprising: class of input signal, operating conditions and functional characteristics of the transmission systems;

a. providing a first priority transmission system;

b. providing at least a second priority transmission system;

c. selecting the first priority transmission system over the second priority transmission
10 system for transmitting the input signal captured at the remote location;

d. defaulting to the second priority transmission system in the event that the first priority transmission system is not available.

28. An apparatus for selecting one of a plurality of transmission systems for transmitting an input signal captured by a remote device, comprising:

a. a portable handset transceiver;

b. a connector for connecting the handset to a first transmission system interface;

5 b. a second, default transmission system provided as an integral component of the device;

c. a detector for detecting the presence of a first transmission system;

d. a control system for selecting the first transmission system whenever it is present and

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for selecting the default transmission system whenever the first transmission system is not present.

29. An apparatus as called for in claim 28, wherein said handset is a wireless transceiver and wherein said connector is an RJ-11 jack for connecting the handset to a wire line telephone system.

30. An apparatus as called for in claim 28, wherein said handset is a wireless transceiver and wherein said connector is capable of supporting an Internet, Ethernet or LAN connection.

31. An apparatus as called for in claim 30, wherein said connector is a modular eight-pin jack.

32. An apparatus as called for in claim 30, wherein said connector is an RJ-45 jack.

33. A processor based apparatus for selecting a transmission system from a plurality of systems by establishing prioritizing criteria based on input signals, operating conditions and functionality of the selected transmission system, comprising:

- a. means for establishing a priority hierarchy based on three sets of criteria comprising:
 - 5 class of input signal, operating conditions and functional characteristics of the transmission systems;
 - b. means for providing a first priority transmission system;
 - c. means for providing at least a second priority transmission system;
 - d. means for selecting the first priority transmission system over the second priority transmission system for transmitting the input signal captured at the remote location;
 - 10 e. means for defaulting to the second priority transmission system in the event that the first priority transmission system is not available.

34. A processor based system as called for in claim 33, wherein said priority criteria is pre-programmed.

35. A processor based system as called for in claim 34, wherein said priority criteria is operator controlled.

36. A processor based system as called for in claim 34, wherein said processor is further programmed to provide means for verifying the presence of a transmission circuit.

37. A processor based system as called for in claim 34, wherein said processor is further programmed to provide means for determining switch status.

38. A processor based system as called for in claim 34, wherein said processor is further programmed to provide means for determining the presence of line voltage.

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39. A processor based system as called for in claim 34, wherein said processor is further programmed to provide means for detecting the presence of an audio signal or tone.

40. A processor based system as called for in claim 34, wherein said processor is further programmed to provide a modem interface.

41. A processor based system as called for in claim 34, wherein said processor is further programmed to provide means for digital/analog conversion.

42. A processor based system as called for in claim 34, wherein said processor is further programmed to provide a CODEC conversion.

43. A processor based system as called for in claim 34, wherein said processor is further programmed to provide means for protocol selection and implementation.

44. A processor based system as called for in claim 34, wherein said processor is further programmed to provide means for verifying the data modes or classes.

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